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New Team at CIA

President Johnson's appointment of Admiral William F. Raborn, Jr., as the new head of the Central Intelligence Agency, comes as a surprise. Admiral Raborn's name was not one of those the speculators were speculating about.

But the Admiral is far from being an unknown. He had a distinguished naval career. He demonstrated his great administrative ability by managing the Polaris missile development program.

He has been described as "a nice person who got along with people when the going was tough." And perhaps this is just what is needed at CIA. The super-secret agency has had its rough moments, including the Bay of Pigs disaster. It is continually under fire from congressmen and others who want to know more about its activities.

The head of the CIA has to be someone who can satisfy everybody without telling them anything. Almost as important, he has to be somebody the President can be absolutely sure of—and Admiral Raborn is an old friend of President Johnson.

The Admiral, it is true, does not have the intelligence experience of an Allen Dulles. But the deputy director, Richard M. Helms, has been involved in intelligence work in World War II and has served CIA since 1947. He is said to be one of a handful of CIA men who opposed the decision to support the ill-fated Cuban rebel invasion in 1961.

Admiral Raborn can supply the personality and drive and Mr. Helms can supply the know-how. They should make a good team.